

The Christian Freeman.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL,

DEVOTED TO RELIGIOUS, MORAL AND SOCIAL PROGRESS.

No. 3.]

MARCH, 1865.

[PRICE 1½d.

THE CONVERT OF ATHENS.

"ALL your arguments will fail to convince me, Timon, that pain is no evil. It is to me the only evil that I can find in the world. Were it not for the aching head and wearied body, what a glorious life this would be: its pleasures would have no alloy, and I could thank the gods for giving me birth,—if, indeed, they had aught to do with it, and I am not the creature of chance."

"Ah! Damocles, you speak feelingly of pain, for last night's festivity has set its seal upon your heavy eye and languid frame, and you regret you cannot indulge as you would in the pleasures vine-crowned Bacchus and his train would shower upon you. But how differently would you reason, did you belong to our calm and temperate sect, to whom pain is no evil, because it is not brought on by physical indulgence, and who find happiness and content in our daily duties."

"Such doctrine may do for you, Timon, with your cool, unimpassioned temperament," replied the youthful Damocles, "but give me the luxuries of our Epicurus."

"Ah!" interrupted Timon, "you call yourselves by the name of Epicurus, but how little of his spirit have you preserved! He was a true philosopher; but your philosophy is only the name for pleasures so refined that they shock not the cultivated taste; but they are pleasures which destroy the intellectual nature, and make you victims of self-indulgence. The great principle of Epicurus was, that happiness was the only good, but to that he added, what his later followers seem to have forgotten, that *good*, or goodness, was the only happiness. Though he surrounded life with luxuries and graces, he never for-

got to *do good*, and his garden bore constant witness, in those who thronged around him, that his happiness was in the exercise of benevolence and kindness."

"To-morrow is the twentieth of the month, the day we devote to our great head," replied Damocles. "Will you go with me to the gardens, where we celebrate his life and death? and you shall there see that we have not quite lost his spirit. His benevolence is shewn in the coin liberally bestowed upon the poor, and the advice and medicine given to the sick, while the intellectual arena is filled by old and young, to dispute with you on any philosophical question. Games, too, will there be to tax the skill of the young, and exercise and strengthen the physical powers, and over all shall be thrown the purple hue of beauty, by the fair hands of our women, who will gather all they can of grace and sweetness,—the many-hued flowers, the rose-lipped shell, the musical cythars, shall all conspire to turn thee, most noble Timon, from thy cold stoicism, and then shalt thou gladly exchange thy sordid raiment for the costly robe of the Epicurean."

Timon did not seem inclined to continue the conversation, for a crowd had gathered about them, mostly composed of the followers of Epicurus, who were easily distinguished by their gay air and gorgeous dress, which was arranged with great regard to becomingness, their long hair entwined with chaplets of the vine and roseleaves, mingled, where birth permitted, with the violet of Athens. Timon and Damocles were good representatives of their several schools; both were eminently handsome; but the fine features of Damocles were marred by a sensual expression, and the heightened

colour, so unusual in a Greek, which is produced by indulgence in the grosser pleasures. Still, his gay and happy air gave an inexpressible charm to his appearance, which was far more attractive to the young than that of his opponent, who, "severe in youthful beauty," scorned all meretricious arts. No silken robe added grace to his figure—no chaplet crowned his fine head; but one beheld unadorned the classic features of an Antinous, united to the lofty expression which might have well become him whose fault was being too just and virtuous.

They were standing in the market, an oblong open place, surrounded by columns which supported an arching roof. It was the great resort of the Athenians, who, in times of peace having but little to occupy them, came up hither to dispute with each other, and to gather the news of the day. Statues of the gods were placed in every part of the building, that its frequenters might have no excuse for neglecting their homage to their deities. There was one among the group that surrounded the young men who attracted the attention of all near him. A glance shewed he was a stranger in Athens. His figure was slight and stooping; his eyes small and piercing; but there was a seal of intellect, almost of inspiration, on his brow, a firmness and compression of the lip, which gave an air of nobleness to his otherwise insignificant person. He was gazing with deep sadness upon a statue of the Cyprian goddess, carved in voluptuous beauty, from Parian marble, and crowned and wreathed with the votive offerings of her worshipers. No enthusiasm animated his face as he looked upon this exquisite piece of art; but, turning away from it, he said:

"Ah! men of Athens, wise as ye are, how is it ye can worship blocks of wood and stone?"

His words caught the ear of the listening crowd, who had been clamouring for Timon's reply to Damocles, as they found their greatest pleasure in discussions of philosophical questions. They quickly turned to the new comer, vehemently exclaiming:

"He abuseth our gods: let him answer for it!"

Thus called upon, the speaker, stretching forth his hand, said:

"Men and brethren of Athens! I perceive that ye are altogether given to religious worship!"

He was interrupted by cries of, "Take him to the Areopagus! we will there hear all he has to say!" And, almost borne by the eager crowd, Paul of Tarsus (for it was none other than the inspired Apostle to the Gentiles) was forced into the Areopagus. It was a magnificent structure on Mars' Hill, and received its name from the great tribunal of Athens, whose chief care it was to protect the established institutions from any innovations. Many of the grey-headed men of the city were assembled within its walls, debating upon the laws of their idolized country. They hastened to make inquiry as to the cause of the tumult which brought so many of the citizens to the hall of justice. They were answered, that there was a stranger among them, a setter-forth of other gods, and that the people wished to hear what he had to say. Silence was shortly imposed, and Paul was called upon to resume his discourse. Standing in the midst of the breathless multitude, he said:

"Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.* For, as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, 'To the unknown God!' Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life and breath, and all things. For in him we live and move and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch, then, as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and men's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men

* Or, according to able commentators, "ye are greatly addicted to religious worship."

everywhere to repent; because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead."

He was here interrupted and permitted to proceed no farther. They would listen to the history of a new god; but the doctrine of a resurrection of the dead seemed so absurd that they deemed the speaker mad, and the multitude mocked and laughed at him for a vain babbler. But some there were who said, "We will hear thee again of this matter."

No attempt was made to detain Paul; but as he passed out one only followed him. It was Timon the Stoic, who, being of a thoughtful mind, had been much moved by Paul's manner and words. His intellectual nature had long craved a higher aliment than the shallow philosophy and religion of the Greeks supplied, and he wished to learn something more of these new doctrines. He drew near to the Apostle, and said, "I would know more of thee. Wilt thou teach me this new faith?"

Paul gladly assented, and Timon, requesting him to follow, led the way to his own house. It was delightfully situated; but even its exterior marked it the abode of a Stoic. No Corinthian or Ionic column supported its portico, but its architecture was of the simplest style, and, on entering, it almost chilled one, from its cold and severe aspect. Statues of Minerva, and of Zeno, the founder of the sect, were the only ornaments of the large vestibule through which Timon led his guest into the garden, whose beauty atoned for the plainness of the mansion. It was filled with flowers and fruits, arranged with exquisite taste,—the trailing arbutus and the graceful dolicos,—indeed all the varieties that the "garden of nature" can boast, except the vine of the grape; that, consecrate to Bacchus, was banished from the Stoic's garden, while it formed the principal ornament of the Epicureans.

In this cool and refreshing spot Paul seated himself. Having partaken of some fruit, which Timon placed before him, he drew from his bosom a roll of the Hebrew Scriptures, and first ex-

plained to his young disciple, who listened with a glowing cheek, the Hebrew account of the formation of the world; then he traced the prophecies, and shewed their fulfilment in Jesus' sacred person. He told of his own persecution of the Christians, and of the miracle which closed his eyes to the light of day, while it opened them to the inner light which poured upon his benighted mind.

So clear did the words of truth appear to Timon, that his mind embraced them instantly, and when Paul had finished his discourse, he clasped his knees and said, "Shew me how I too may become a Christian; do with me what thou wilt, but lead me to the Lord Jesus."

Paul, with noble boldness, told him of the sacrifices that must be made, if he would bear the cross of his Master; but these were no discouragement to the young Stoic, whose nature seemingly had undergone a change, and, instead of the cold and indifferent being he had appeared to Damocles and the gaping crowd in the market-place, he had become soul-absorbed by the divine teachings to which he had listened, and animated with the high and holy enthusiasm which their spirit inspired. Seeing that the change was indeed in his heart, Paul offered to baptize the young disciple, and, water being brought, his consecrating hand was laid upon the noble head of the Greek, who from that time went forth as the disciple of Christ, to preach him crucified; one of the many converts who, won by Paul's noble eloquence, "clave unto him and believed."

Timon soon found he could gather but few hearers among the luxurious and news-loving Athenians, and therefore, bidding farewell to his native city, he went to Corinth, where he laboured among the converts, till age crept over his healthy frame, and in advanced life he resigned the cross he had so long borne, to receive in its stead the crown of light which has been promised to the true disciples of the Saviour.

A SPIRITUALIST'S REPLY TO UNITARIANS.

A SHORT time ago we noticed what we believed to be the deception that was practised in the name of spiritual agen-

cies. We still hold there is at present a vast amount of imposition current in society under the name of Spiritualism. A Unitarian lady, a firm believer in these latter-day manifestations, has written to us in defence of this system of correspondence with the departed. We will place her kind, sober and earnest defence before our readers, as we think common justice requires that both sides of this question should be heard. At the close of her letter there is a poem purporting to be from the spirit of Robert Burns. It undoubtedly partakes of the spirit, genius and language of Burns, and is worthy of perusal. The letter we lay before our readers contains a hint for the London District Unitarian Society to take up this matter for consideration or a thorough discussion at some of their meetings. We question they will think this within the sphere of their operations.

Dear Sir,—My cousin tells me that you think, as I am so deeply interested in Spiritualism, I should write a paper on it. I do not feel able to do justice to the subject, but will, if you please, give you a few of our experiences. I know very well, dear sir, that you are a spiritualist in the truest sense; still I am pleased to find you willing to investigate spiritualism in its modern form, and despise not small things, such as occur in the first and lowest manifestations, in movements of tables and other articles by unseen agency. We do not despise the alphabet, because we know it has to be learnt before we can read; neither should we forget the humble origin of Christianity, and how Jesus was despised and rejected of men. I will here quote a few words from A. J. Davis, of New York: "The clergy of Christendom occupy the same position to-day that the Jewish priests occupied two thousand years ago. Is it not strange they do not see that the whole Jewish nation is not christianized for this reason, because *Jesus was not born as they had determined he should have been*—because he did not teach the doctrines which they had resolved could only be orthodox? And it would seem, with such an example before them, engraved on the very history of the progress of Christianity, that the priests of the nineteenth cen-

tury might bestow more respectful attention on the spiritual developments of the day. They array themselves in opposition to and defame those things of which they have no absolute knowledge."

To a certain class of minds, the facts now to be obtained seem necessary before they can realize the nearness of the unseen world; for I know many who attend places of worship without deriving any belief or comfort from what they hear; hence these proofs are useful. Higher developments soon follow; and I feel that all candid, truthful minds should give the subject a patient hearing and fair trial before condemning it as imposture and jugglery. No doubt it is very open to the tricks of unscrupulous people. Every good thing we possess may be perverted or inverted; but when we see the true mediumistic power possessed by those we cannot doubt, either in the soundness of their sense or nerves, or the purity of their characters, it is time we gave the matter the attention it is found to deserve by those who have devoted years to the study. It seems to me that Unitarians, if their liberality be not an empty boast, should be the first to welcome a new light—one like this, too, that sweeps from its glorious path all bigotry, sectarianism and old theology, which confirms their simple and beautiful faith, adding that element which Unitarianism never yet possessed, namely, *vitality*, inward and outward growth; for, as William Howitt says, "A church without spiritual gifts is dead; let the Protestant churches look to it who have voluntarily abandoned all claim to miracles and tongues and gifts of healing and discerning of spirits; for as sure as they are without these, and as long as they are without these, they are but as withered fig-trees, about which Christ has left express orders; they are no more living churches than a statue, however beautiful, is a living man." The gifts possessed by the apostles may still be ours; for Jesus tells us, "The works that I do shall ye do also, and greater works," &c., &c.; also, "These signs shall follow them that believe: in my name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any

deadly thing it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover." All these so-called miracles are now occurring, according to the testimony of thousands of living witnesses; and surely this is stronger evidence than that of a few hundred people handed down to us through many centuries: if we reject the one, we must reject the other; while accepting the present evidences, they shed a new and beautiful light on the old. Never did I realize the truth and beauty of Scripture till now.

We have found a few mediums among our own circle—my sister, who has been influenced to draw by the mechanical movements of her hand, she having no idea what the subject of the drawing would be. It commenced with the most rudimental forms, improving rapidly, till flowers, fruits, birds, landscapes, were given, and recently groups of heads and floating spiritual forms. We also discovered my brother's wife to be a medium for a different class of phenomena. While staying with her at the sea-side, we sat daily for a week at a rather heavy work-table; at the end of that time the table was raised gently and gracefully from the floor, descending again without noise; also it floated or undulated about, and thus kept time to music while off the ground, with only the tips of our fingers resting lightly on the top. On one occasion the table was raised on to the knees of myself and brother; thence, at our request, it was raised higher still, afterwards descending to the floor. Questions were also answered by the table being raised thrice for Yes, and once for No. This lady is unfortunately so engrossed by the cares and anxieties of a large family that she has no time to devote to her interesting gift, and though now deeply interested, she was a strong sceptic. She told us, one evening after we left the table rose while she sat alone at it. There is so much interesting literature now published on spiritualism, that none need be ignorant of these facts, occurring so freely in America, in France, Germany, Australia, London, and elsewhere. If any be desirous to try for themselves, let them form a circle of earnest, truthful characters, and, placing their hands on a small table, wait the result:

doubtless among them mediums will soon be developed; if not at first, it will come in time. Impatience and over-anxiety retard the manifestations, while harmony and a trusting spirit is necessary to the reception of spirit influence; and although we can generally resist this power, we can never command it. I have often wished this subject could be brought before the Unitarian meetings for discussion; for I must confess, since we have been exploring this new and vast field of thought, we have found their writings and their speeches very devoid of interest by comparison, ignoring as they do the flood of light now beginning again to stream upon our planet from the higher spheres. Hearing, as we recently had the pleasure of doing, your lectures, given with such care and ability, on the Evidences of Immortality outside of the Bible, we yet could not help thinking what superior evidence of immortality is afforded by a study of the spiritual literature of the day. I had the pleasure of forwarding to you a number of the *Spiritual Times*, with an account of the opening of the Lyceum, at which we were present. I think you would find Dr. Ferguson and the Rev. J. M. Spear quite congenial spirits; they would be happy to speak or lecture at any of your meetings.

I trust you will excuse my ineffectual attempt to bring this matter to your notice, not attributing my failure to the want of interest in the cause itself. I only wish to be the humble means of drawing your attention to higher sources of information.

I remain, dear sir, in the cause of Truth, yours sincerely,

[Our space compels us to let the poem stand over till next month.—ED. C. F.]

A LAY SERMON.

"For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth."—PAUL.

A SHORT sentence this, but, like many more in Paul's writings, an exceedingly pithy one; for, indeed, Paul was master of every style of writing, from the sententious and aphoristic, in which, as it were, the sense bears down the sound, up to the grandly eloquent, in which the sound contends *with* the sense for the

mastery. This sentence is a striking example of the former of these kinds of writing.

The word *truth* here may be fairly taken in its largest sense. It is a mental abstraction, and supposes the action of a rational intelligence; but it stands for the completed sum of the divine forces acting upon man's life and ways—in other words, the sum of the principles appointed by God for the regulation of man's life and destiny. Could we understand these fully, we should then obtain a view of which Paul is here speaking about, divine truth. It is a large idea, far beyond the range of our actual attainments; but the very power of framing it bespeaks a noble nature—bespeaks a being made in the very image of God. We talk lightly enough of our powers of mind and imagination; but did we realize that whereof we speak, we should be struck dumb at the thought of possessing such transcendently wonderful powers.

"Truth," then, is the sum of the divine forces of God's laws and designs concerning man. And now what is our relation to these forces as here stated?

"For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth."

This sentiment brings us into the presence of the humbling fact that human existence has its limitations.

Oblivious as we generally are to this fact, how true is it! For what so certain as that human life has its conditions and limitations? There is the limitation of *time*. Yesterday we were not, and to-morrow we shall cease to be; for lo! man is "like grass which in the morning flourisheth and groweth up, and in the evening is cut down and withereth;" and if it be true that man has found place on this earth for 6000 years, then not less than 180 times has the race been renewed upon the face thereof. So it has come that the brevity of human life—its evanescent character—has been the theme of bards and of all reflective minds from time immemorial; and when the moralist would rebuke the haughtiness of human pride and greatness, this is the scourge he fitly employs. There is the limitation of *space*. The area any one man can traverse is utterly insignificant; and when he dies, almost the smallest cavity in the earth is large enough to hold his

remains, soon not to be distinguished from the earth which receives him. There is the limitation of power and fame. Would a man boast his power, yet how small the arena in which he can exercise it, and, once removed from the scene of action, how soon is the greatest name forgotten! Men talk of immortalizing themselves by their deeds; but how little do we know even of the great men of our own day, and of the great departed we know still less; and even if we could count them all up, and had in our secret hearts a shrine for each one, yet how small their number compared with the aggregate of those who have died and "made no sign!" The vaunt of fame and power is idle enough at the very best; but for the enormous mass of our fellow-creatures, it would be only a bitter jest at their own expense. But the limitations which press upon human existence do not end even here. Say that the average term of human existence is short, yet we are not sure even of that; and if we were, who could guarantee us vigour of mind and body to enjoy it? Say that the prime things required of a man in order to a happy life are the wise use of his powers, yet how sadly certain is it that the best care of his health will not always secure that blessing, or his industry supply him with food, or his affections bring him repose, or the best-laid scheme of whatever sort command success. The opposite to this may hold good as a rule, but only as a rule having many exceptions; and there are but very few of us but have to lament the changes and chances, the uncertainties and disappointments, of human life. And is it, then, for us to boast ourselves—for us to hold our heads high in arrogance and scorn?—us, the thread of whose life may be snapped to-morrow—us, who are not sure of our best earthly possessions for a day—us, who are of such small account in the world. In view of the many and varied limitations which hedge us on all sides, what a call is made upon us to put off the haughtiness and pride we are so apt to indulge!

But these general considerations are very far from bringing out a full picture of man's impotence as exhibited in the text. We have been thinking of man as the subject of conditions, some of which

he may at least have it in his power to control; but the text exhibits him in relation to conditions in no case to be successfully resisted. Man in relation to the great primal forces of the universe—the unalterable laws and designs of God—that is the picture we have presented here. And O! to think of God as *thus* acting upon man's life and destiny—to think of this divine pressure, so to speak, acting upon man from the very beginning—this action going on without break or pause, bearing down all opposition—this action, so silent in its course, yet so invincible in its might! It is this idea which is so largely dwelt upon by the prophets of old, who would seem as if they could never say enough to bring into view the awful truth of God's omnipotent might. This, I say, is the idea which they are constantly flashing upon the minds of their countrymen in their pride and obstinacy and sinfulness—this, that they are fighting against the almightiness of God in their rebellion against his laws—and they use every form of language to point out the utter folly and madness of such a course. Would not one think, indeed, that the madness of such a course was but too apparent? When the prophet says, "Woe to the man which striveth with his Maker," whose heart does not instantly respond? Yet all history and experience shew that men are mad enough to make the vain and impious attempt. Yes, the same man who anticipates with confidence the return of the seasons—who recognizes in every department of nature the uniform and unerring action of law—and who knows that in his material undertakings he can absolutely do nothing unless he first set himself to act in concurrence with law—this very man, I say, may be seen to act as if he thought he could with perfect impunity break through every law which God has appointed for the regulation of his moral and spiritual life! Alas for us, then! it is not a mere phantom of the imagination, but a grim fact of common experience, which Paul is here grappling with, when he says, "For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth."

But passing for a moment this aspect of the subject, let me say, it has aspects for the good man that are cheering,

animating and inspiring, in the very highest degree.

And first, with reference to the world at large. In what a sadly perplexed and chaotic condition is Europe at the present day! Proud monarchs yet ruling with a rod of iron, the liberty of nations and individuals lying crushed and bleeding under foot—ambitious states seeking to extend their power—mighty nations seeking to make a prey of weaker ones—the red sword of war ready in every direction to leap from its scabbard—is it not enough to make the good man lift his hands in dismay to heaven, crying, "How long, O Lord, how long?" Yet let him take heart, for "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," and *his* counsels must stand; for not the mightiest monarch or nation on earth can for long do aught "against the truth, but for the truth." There has been retribution on a grand scale before, and there will be again. Raised aloft above the surges of tyrannical power stands the beacon of truth, liberty and justice, evermore guiding the nations to the desired haven.

We may apply the sentiment to our own country. Without doubt, our internal condition is, in many respects, an enviable one; yet who does not feel that many a change must be made before our laws, before public opinion and usage, are brought into harmony with the Divine counsels and laws! But shall we despair? Never; every false maxim, every unjust law, every corrupt practice, bears within itself the seeds of its own dissolution; for "men can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." Because God rules, who is the author of truth, therefore the day of "purer manners," "noble laws," "the Christ that is to be," will dawn and not tarry.

We may apply it to the spread of true ideas and opinions. What a day of dire perplexity is this in matters of religious belief! Men on all sides are at their wits' ends; for a great mental upheaving has taken place, and they know not what to do or whither to turn. The old foundations upon which they had rested with so much confidence are, one by one, disappearing, or are plainly seen to be past; but because they as yet know of no others, not dreaming of granite foundations old as the everlasting hills and as firm, so they con-

tinue to hold by these with the grasp of despair; or, missing them, know not, as I have said, what to do. For ourselves, we are not unwilling to let these old foundations go; for it has been our endeavour, not without success as we trust, to build upon foundations laid by God himself in the very constitution of things; and therefore we are not afraid of the raging storm, but can calmly say, "Great is truth, and it must prevail," and even now is prevailing; for when human trusts fail, then is the time when the heart looks upward and seeks to stay itself upon Him who is the only wise and true. So for us, it is not a time of discouragement and dismay, but rather one in which the text is a prophesy that is being fulfilled before our own eyes—"for men can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth."

We may apply it, again, to our own characters.

Is it so that we are indeed applying ourselves to make "our calling and election sure"? Is it truly our endeavour, day by day, to add to our knowledge temperance, and to temperance meekness, and to meekness patience? Then let us take the cheering consideration to our hearts that we are in league with the mightiest forces of the universe—with the very omnipotence of God himself, who is thus making every effort of ours easier and more certain of the desired end. The same apostle, in another place, enjoins "not to be weary in well-doing;" and he had good reason for it, inasmuch as he knew that even the smallest effort of ours to approve ourselves right in God's sight is not without its instant reward in his effectual help. Only let us be steadfast to our purpose, and every effort shall be, as it were, a step onward towards firmer ground and into purer air. "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

And once more—we may apply it to our "works of faith" and "labours of love."

And here I may briefly say, that the words of sympathy we speak, the deeds of kindness we do, and the lessons we teach, if they be God's lessons, are, in every case, as seed sown into good ground and bearing fruit. We are apt to doubt this, I know. We are apt to think that,

because there is no specific result, there is no result at all. But it is a fair question to ask, whether there may not be a *negative* result, although there is no *positive* one? I believe fully that "God's word cannot return unto him void;" and although it may fail to produce positive improvement of character, it yet serves, in many cases, to prevent further retrogression.

In all these cases, we enter a field in which there is no doubt and uncertainty, but in which the good providence of God, acting through the agency of immutable law, is pledged to the production of a successful issue. If the mightiest interests of mankind—if truth and goodness, are not secure, then have we no reliance, and it were better indeed if we had never been born!

But now, having dwelt upon the more cheering aspects of this sentiment, let me turn, in conclusion, to the darker one which it was the primary intention of the apostle to present.

"For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth."

Can anything be clearer than that the fact is so? And yet there are those of us who are recklessly throwing ourselves into the unequal contest every day of our lives. If there be a law of God which we cannot but acknowledge, it is that which bids us forsake the wrong and cleave to the right—if there be a law of God which bears upon its very front marks of its divine origin, it is that which bids us be just, pure, meek, merciful; and yet I fear there is no one law, either of God or man, which we take so little into account. O let us remember—let us solemnly lay it to heart, that by our perversity and disobedience we are not fighting with an empty abstraction, a mere dream of the poet or philosopher, but with His omnipotence who "ruleth supreme in the armies of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of earth." Is it not something awful to think of the action of His laws in the material world, so sure, so decisive, so irresistible? And shall it be nothing to us that His laws in the moral and spiritual world are like sure and irresistible? I pray you remember that "we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." Ah! it is so—for he who will not serve God to his

own salvation, must still serve Him by the ruin he will at length bring down upon himself.

Halifax.

J. S.

THE FAITH, DOUBTS AND DENIALS OF UNITARIANS.

THE rule of faith among the first Christian churches appears to have been exceedingly plain and simple, a belief that Jesus was the Christ, and a hope through his resurrection. However many and complex the articles of Religion are now, she started her career of usefulness and won her first signal victories with very little creed armour. She was then possessed with a spirit of simplicity, earnestness and moral consistency. In her earliest career, the strongholds of opposition were assailed with fearlessness and much success. We are told in the Acts of the Apostles, many of the priests believed. Soon after this, the philosophy that at first scorned, was won over to take up the cause of the new religion, and in the course of time the powers that persecuted the church allied themselves to her, and sought the extinction of her enemies by the sword of the state. During this successful career, the distinguished historian Mosheim says of the first two centuries, "The Christian system, as it was hitherto taught, preserved its native and beautiful simplicity, and was comprehended in a small number of articles, the public teachers inculcating no other doctrines than those taught in the Apostles' Creed." And he adds, "As long as the Scriptures were the only rule of faith, religion preserved its native purity; and in proportion as their decisions were either neglected or postponed to the inventions of men, it degenerated from its divine and primitive simplicity."

The Apostles' Creed is interesting to us, not only for what it contains, but for its silence on every one of those points of doctrine now generally regarded as the fundamental doctrines of Christianity. In the outset and during the most notable victories of Christianity, the popular theology of the present day is ignored by one of the first confessions of faith current among the churches; and here is a marked difference not only of form, but

of spirit, to which for a moment we invite attention—the attitude, the moral attitude, of the present, compared with the past, in which the church stood towards its faith. The first Christians pronounced their belief in the face of the world in arms, and said they were ready to lay down all to attest their sincerity; but now confessions of faith are repeated in the face of truth and charity, and are pronounced to save those worldly and social distinctions procured by an adherence to the Christian church.

For nearly fifteen hundred years the simple faith of the early church has been overlaid by much error, which has involved her in moral turpitude and various inconsistencies. During the last few hundred years there has been a manifest movement to restore the primitive doctrines of faith and the ancient simplicity and purity of worship. The Unitarian church has proved, we think, a useful auxiliary in this work, and though it has not occupied so prominent a position in the eye of the world as some other sections of the church, it has done a work, and is doing still more, of which we need not be ashamed. Although at first the Unitarian effort was predicted to prove a failure, the success has been somewhat marvellous. We are correct in saying that upwards of three thousand Christian churches in the world at the present time are antitrinitarian, with nearly two millions of members. And then the influence of our faith, as a writer in the orthodox and conservative paper, *The Press*, affirmed, a few years ago, reviewing a book of Mr. Martineau's—"Those who are practically and essentially Unitarians constitute a large class: perhaps, if we take Unitarianism in this extended sense, it is among the most influential creeds of the day . . . and we suspect that among good men this class might be found to outnumber the more advanced Christians." These words were written when comparing our numerical Unitarian strength with our real influence.

In view, then, of these facts, the simplicity of the primitive faith, apostasy from it, the movements of the present age to restore it, and the part we take in this reformation, we propose to meet a common objection—it is, that we have no creed—no belief is meant; our attitude

is that of the destroyer only. A cold, unkind front is generally presented to us under this impression. Fraternization with the Roman Catholic Church is often regarded with pity, while sympathy with us is spoken of as dangerous. Our position and success is the greatest disturbing influence among the churches. We believe these fearful apprehensions of harm and disaster are misapprehensions. A great Christian work is necessary in the world, and the worn-out speculations of men must be supplanted with the truth of God: then again, as at the first, Christianity will restore to the church and the world a unity of spirit and all the freshness and beauty of a renovated humanity.

In the first place, one of our distinguishing features is that of a **FREE CHURCH**. We owe allegiance to no human name or authority. Our profession of Christianity necessarily binds us to Christ and God: we feel this freedom does not the less bind us to moral and intellectual consistency, and the rejection of mere human authority in matters of faith and conscience. We speak for our churches in general when we say, we open our arms as wide as the width of the human family; there is no exclusion; whosoever will come, may come with all their differences, and share our Christian fellowship. We recoil with horror at the sentence of final exclusion of any soul from Divine favour because of any speculative error, nor less do we shrink from the advocacy of coldness or unkindness towards Christian or Heathen because of some differences of opinion. This is a glorious liberty and a grand distinction. We do not deny this leaves the question of action and thought on many matters entirely open to fair discussion and practical management. Whether this or that man may be fairly regarded as a Christian, the liberty to judge is by no means infringed by this position. Nor is the right to receive into full Christian fellowship, implying a just participation in the management of the affairs of any particular Christian church, or to reject, infringed by our freedom and readiness to hold moral and spiritual fellowship with any one who desires it. The rule among us is as simple as that of the primitive church: a desire to be a

member of the Christian church finds immediate welcome within our pale.

The question is asked, "Is it possible that a denomination like ours, on this open basis, can have any unity of faith?" We have solved the problem. Without a general order or coercion of opinion, we find certain truths, moral and religious, gain a clear ascendancy beyond question or doubt, and form a bond of union and co-operation. Yes, there are many things we unquestionably believe, on which as a church we throw ourselves with no half heart, and they are fundamental, we think, of religious life.

There is nothing taught among us as a principle of moral and spiritual life but can be stated in the very words of the Scriptures. So we believe in the sufficiency of the Bible as a rule of faith. The right and duty of private judgment we enjoy and encourage among all our people. Curious enough, while many of the churches uphold the plenary inspiration theory and the accuracy of every sentence of the Bible, they supplement it with articles of faith which obviously contravene both the spirit and letter of Scripture.

Some articles of faith among us may be regarded as fundamental or central, from which radiate other views which derive their strength and colour from the central idea. The most central and fundamental belief among us is the unity and perfection of God. Our theological structure is based on this, and it forms the great bond of union among us, and gives the name Unitarian to our churches. Not a few of our ministers and members have come to our communion through this doctrine of the Divine Unity. Our worship is shaped through the influence of our faith in the oneness of God; and our common belief in the goodness of creation and the purity of childhood, as well as that resignation and trust we repose in the trials of life, have their source in our faith in the beneficence and moral perfections of God. We are marked out for this belief; and we have no trifling mission in seeking to restore the Christian church to this particular doctrine. We have already intimated our faith in prayer and worship, as a duty and a privilege to God and our own nature.

Our practice of prayer and worship leads us to remark on our belief in divine presence and power, which solves the difficulty of divine inspiration and revelation. In times gone by we think there may have been—nay, rather we believe there were—men with so large an income of the spirit of God, that we call them the inspired prophets of God; and they have long stood out from the mass of mankind as religious teachers and guides. It is true our church does not limit the spirit of God to times and places, yet there is among us an unquestioning faith that there have been men ordained and anointed of God for the enlightenment of the world and the salvation of our race. The faith that recognizes this leads to the duty of prayer and communion with God, which, we repeat, lessens all the difficulties of our belief in inspiration.

The most prominent and interesting example of the spirit of God in man is in the Founder of the Christian church. We believe in the divine mission of Jesus Christ. We recognize in him a moral and spiritual Saviour, and an official position and greatness espoused by him towards all his disciples of Lord and Master. Adverse as this may be to some who would have no masters, yet it appears, after all, very analogous to what is daily taking place in the trust we repose to authority in many minor matters of common life. We see God has raised up men gifted with an understanding that almost intuitively grasps the nature and relationships of this world of matter, and forecasts in a word accurate results without the usual experience of toil and time. So we think Christ, gifted by the spirit of God in an extraordinary way, stood upon a higher ground, and saw with the divine eye the moral and spiritual relationships of our race and also our destiny, demonstrated by physical miracle the credential of his mission fitted to our weakness, his moral leadership. We also believe in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and that his first disciples saw him and held communion with him after his death here on earth: this, a most unusual thing, proved the recruiting power of their drooping hearts, a firmer hope of future life to them and after generations, and has been one chief source of the life of the Christian church.

It is only fair to add here, there has been some tendency of late to doubt and disuse the miraculous attestations of the life of Christ; but not in the Unitarian church only. We may say, it is the conviction of not a few of us, while such denial alters not a single moral fact or spiritual aspiration, that it considerably impairs the agency of the Christian church for diffusing the highest and holiest truths and most solacing hopes that belong to our religious system.

We are misunderstood by outsiders on more than one or two important questions. We are regarded as driving a bargain with God for heaven and happiness through our works. No church more heartily accepts the doctrines of Divine love, free grace, the unmerited favour of God, than we do. As all the elements of the material prosperity of the husbandman, the earth, air, sunshine and shower, are not of his creation, but the servants of the Divine will, so we regard the essentials of life, present happiness and future hope, as gifts of God. Yet we believe there are conditions of happiness that lie in our own hands; that the pure in heart, meek, merciful, peaceful and upright, everywhere are blessed of God, children of God, and that these moral traits more than any other mark us out as disciples of Jesus Christ; that from sin and evil passions we must work out our own salvation with fear and trembling.

We are also misunderstood in reference to the doctrine of retribution, the just punishment of sin, and regarded as not believing in the punishment of sin. One of the popular religious journals of England affirmed this a little time ago. This is unquestionably a false view of us. The doctrine of retribution, the sure and certain punishment of sin, "that every disobedience receives a just recompence of reward," is constantly taught in our papers and pulpits. It is only painful to us to know how imperfectly by our neighbouring churches, the so-called orthodox, this doctrine is understood. The false views of the popular theology have done something to hide the clearness with which this doctrine of the punishment of sin should be always presented to erring and sinful man. Unquestionably we all believe that Divine justice and

truth are Divine goodness, and that the punishment of sin is not to be regarded in the sense of vindictive wrath, but a holy ordination intended to reduce the amount of human suffering rather than increase it, consistent with our nature as responsible and free agents. We accept as one of the most unquestionable and important facts a moral judgment, and that there are rewards and punishments for the righteous and the wicked. We also as a church everywhere pray for and believe in the forgiveness of sin. We do not find the doctrine of a certain and universal retribution inconsistent with our faith in Divine forgiveness. We believe that repentance, reformation and newness of life, reinstate us in the Divine favour: we suffer for transgression and turn away from sin; our past is then forgotten, called blotted out, and, like the prodigal restored to our Father's house, freely forgiven, although we have eaten of the bitter fruits of our former ways. No section of the Christian church more distinctly upholds the faith of immortal life and personal resurrection from the dead than we do. The trials of life, the pains of sickness, and the darkness of death, are lessened by this the best of all hopes. We might have enumerated more particulars. How grievously we are misrepresented when it is said we have no faith! We have among all our churches a distinct recognition of the great principles of theological and Christian truth and personal righteousness. What a useful church and a pure and noble life may be built up on those religious realities on which we trust ourselves, apart from all the other speculations of scholastic divinity—the existence of an all-perfect God, the declared love of God to man, the required love of man to God and man to man—the manifestation of God through Christ, the doctrine of divine revelation, inspiration, prayer and worship—the certainty of a just retribution, our moral agency and religious obligations—the doctrine of Divine forgiveness and immortality. We feel it quite unnecessary to defend those doctrines by scriptural quotations, as they must appear to every one in complete accordance with the clear and constant teaching of the New Testament. Nor can it be denied we press upon the attention of our

churches continually the greater importance of practical righteousness, reverence and self-denial, justice, truth and love in all our relationships, purity in all things, patience in our aims and pursuits, and increasing progress towards perfection.

There are several articles of religion among the Trinitarian churches exalted into importance, of which we may be said to hold a middle course. The angry controversy about free-agency and necessity has no fixed footing among us as a denomination, as among the Calvinists and Arminians. The same thing may be said of the existence of evil spirits. We generally deny the existence of a personal devil such as the popular theology lifts up into so much attention, but we do not repudiate the belief that there may be less good spirits, and that some of them may possibly have, like good spirits, some influence at present unknown to us. Between the doctrines of partial salvation and universal restoration it would appear we steer a kind of middle course as a denomination, some of our ministers and people holding to the doctrine of future limited punishment and destruction, while others among us believe in the doctrine of universal restoration,—the just punishment of all sin, and then the final holiness and happiness of all mankind. The doctrine of justification by faith, so noteworthy among Protestants generally, has small hold of the Unitarian mind. Its Lutheran aspect we reject. Yet we know there is truth in the declaration of St. Paul, "We are justified by faith;" for it is, after all, faith that bridges over the chasm, the apparent distance, between the finite and infinite, the present and future state of being, that fills up the distance between the Creator and creature; so the doctrine receives a qualified admission among our churches. The existence of a distinct and separate being called the Holy Ghost, and the doctrine of the pre-existence of Jesus Christ, are admitted by some of our ministers and people. Our Unitarianism neither stands nor falls by those doctrines. Some of us think it highly improbable that these doctrines, from the evidence we have, are true; others think differently. All-important as such doctrines are in other churches, we hold fellowship one with another, and allow those questions to be held subordinate to Christian

unity. On the character of the inborn nature of man we are not all at one. We all deny that we fell in Adam and became defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body; nevertheless, there is some sympathy among us with the doctrine of transmitted evil dispositions and propensities, while others hold the perfect and pure nature of childhood at its birth. The supernatural character of the Bible, and the accounts therein of prophecy and miracle, have afforded a large margin for differences of opinion among us; some apparently denying all such prophecy and miracle, called special interposition in the affairs of the world by God; while others among us firmly believe as any Christian church in the power and practice of God to arrest human attention, through the agency of prophecy and miracle, to moral and spiritual facts of our being. In our doctrine and practice of prayer and worship, some shades of difference exist. There are hymns among us which contain ascriptions of praise to Christ, and words akin to petition, to which some strongly object, and others have no objection at all. In prayer, some think that its only efficacy is on the mind of the supplicant; while others think that all our thoughts as well as our thanks may be laid before God, things for the body as well as the soul, and protection and blessing on the absent as well as the present—the needs of time as well as the gifts of eternity, may be laid with faith at the footstool of God, and become the earnest prayer of the soul. Of our ordinances, some hold the Lord's Supper service, and some do not. Some of our churches practise adult baptism, others infant baptism, others a mere dedication service without water, and some have no service for new-born children at all. Here are a few of the things that find a kind of partial admission among us, by some held with great fervency and regularity, by others not regarded at all. Almost any one of those points in a Christian church otherwise constituted than we are would cause a schism and angry strife. We are not our brother's judge, and we do well not to force our views, but to trust to the force of truth and the natural instincts of the human soul, that ultimately seeks alliance with all that is true and good.

No doubt there are always some phases of thought and faith, in the church as in the world, passing from the class of fundamentals to the class of indifferents, and in time disappearing altogether. It is interesting, indeed, to read in the history of the Christian church of the excitement caused by controversies, the cause of which has gone entirely out among Catholic and Protestant alike. Many doctrines once warmly espoused have been stranded far away up the stream of history, while the great principles of personal righteousness then almost uncared for have reached us fresh and unworn as the first day of their creation. So while some doctrines are disappearing from general notice, who among us knows but at present, like stars that have risen to view, there are still great truths, as yet overlaid by our passions or hidden by our ignorance, that shall be the means of greater life to the world?

We will now conclude with a very brief survey of the doctrines we generally deny. We sometimes speak of our church occupying an advanced position among the churches. We think we are justified in leaving far behind us several doctrines as indisputably false to the gospel of Jesus Christ, the nature of God, and the understanding we possess; namely, the doctrine of the Trinity, the deity of Jesus Christ, vicarious sacrifice, Calvinistic election, hereditary depravity or original sin, plenary inspiration of the Bible, and the doctrine of the eternal torment of the wicked. Curious enough that those doctrines should be accounted as fundamental by one wing of the church, of indifferent value by a large section, and totally repudiated by another: so it is, and so it may always be with things human, while the truth of God abides for ever.

We have a system of faith which includes articles of religion which have been the guiding stars of our church and the faith of the great mass of mankind not ostensibly united with us. These are to our souls clear and unquestionable, never obscured by doubt or hidden by passion. They are the pillars of our church. Other doctrines there are, partially admitted, less distinct, nebulous, and much less useful for the purposes of life. Some of those are questioned, and form the border-land, a kind of battle-

ground of the churches. We agree to differ on those points. There is a third class of doctrines we generally deny. They obscure, we think, the fatherly character of God; they are dark clouds that constantly imperil the peace of the church and the hopes of the future. Our mission appears to be to restore the faith of the apostolic church, elevate the heart of man to a nearer communion and greater trust in God, a deeper sympathy with universal man, and a more hopeful look-out on the great future to which our souls continually aspire. May we not hope we fulfil to a great extent the wish of one of the greatest Reformers of the Christian religion, Wickliffe, who said: "I look forward to the time when some brethren, whom God shall condescend to teach, will be thoroughly converted to the primitive religion of Christ, and that such persons, after they have gained their liberty from antichrist, will return freely to the original doctrine of Jesus; and then they will edify the church as did Paul."

ALICE GREY'S WALK IN LOVE.

It was a low, small room, without an ornament save the fragrant roses and glowing geraniums which filled one of the windows. It was a lowly room, and lowly people dwelt there; two sisters, one aged, but healthy and active, the other quite young, but a frail, delicate plant, her intellectual head shewing an undue mental development, which the body was too slender to sustain. The elder was busy with her needle, but her weary hand found it hard work to press it through the coarse straw hat which she was fashioning.

"Oh, Lucy, it does seem hard you should have to work so, when I can only sit with folded hands and be a burden to myself and you," said Patience, looking up, as her sister's heavy sigh struck her ear.

"Don't think of that, Paty, dear; it is my only comfort that I have you to work for; but it is hard that we cannot get the things you really need. Now your medicines and the nourishing food you require, how shall we get them?"

"Perhaps they will come to us in some

way we know not of, Lucy; and if they do not, I can do without them. That is a glorious discipline for us, if we only improve it aright; but I must confess I am too prone to murmur, and ask why God has placed us in this painful position, when so many are overflowing with the wealth the tiniest portion of which would make us so comfortable."

"That thought is always in my heart, Patience, and——"

"That is what makes life more of a burden, sister; if you would not always be tasting the dregs, you would not find life so much of a burden. We have many a gleam of sunshine on our rugged path, and here is one just coming in," she said, glancing up, and seeing some one entering their gate.

"It is Miss Grey; she has tapped—please let her in quick as you can, sister Lucy," she said, as the trembling hands put down the work, and the clumsy feet tottered to the door.

A real ray of sunshine that warmed and irradiated the whole room, seemed to come in with Alice Grey; for her face was so peaceful, so radiant with the joy from within, her look so full of loving sympathy, that it cheered the drooping, almost desponding, hearts before she spoke. She put a basket quietly upon the table, and then turned her first questions and apparent thoughts to the exquisite flowers which threw out their richest perfume for her. She then talked with the two sisters, first of themselves; then of pleasant things without; then of books, opening a small package, and producing first a tale of sacrifice and self-devotion, then a volume of sacred poetry. For she knew persons so situated as Patience and Lucy Drummond must have something to raise and elevate them, or they would sink in despair.

Patience's eyes brightened as she saw the books, and she stretched her hands out eagerly for them.

"Thank you, Miss Grey. You know always what will do me the most good. Lucy and I were saying, as you came in, that we ought not to murmur when we still have so many blessings."

"But, oh, Miss Grey, it is hard not to be able to meet the absolute needs of this dear child," and the withered hand was laid caressingly on the still unsilvered

head of the young woman—"she needs medicines which we cannot afford to buy."

"Ah, that reminds me of the contents of my basket, Miss Lucy," said Alice. "Here you will find botanic treasures without number, perhaps the very ones she is wanting just now; you look as if you almost doubted its being possible, but see here." And she opened her basket. "Wild cherry bark," "lobelia," "yarrow"—"these are what you use. A young friend was sick at our house, and her Eclectic physician gave her all these roots: as she had done with them, I thought they would be useful to you, who follow the same practice."

"And I was just murmuring because we could not get these very things. O, Miss Grey, if we could only learn faith, and trust in this invisible Providence which is ever watching over us, what a blessing it would be!" said Lucy.

"Yes, Miss Lucy, the lesson of loving trust is the one we ought to learn; it is very hard always to remember this, particularly when troubled and perplexed by the day's anxieties, and hardly knowing where to turn for earthly comfort and relief; but a life of faith brings its own reward. And just this one little event should teach us not to look forward for evil, but trust that what we need will be given; and with this thought in my heart, I must leave you."

"Please take this one rose," and she broke off a beautiful "cloth of gold," and hung over it a scarlet fuschia and a few leaves of geranium,—a bouquet more valuable to Alice Grey than the costliest green-house collection could have been, for it exhaled the perfume of a grateful heart, and told her that she had carried comfort to two wearied and heavily burdened souls. That morning's walk had been in love.

"I used to like Alice Grey so much, and I can't help liking her now, for all I get so provoked with her; but she is tiresome with her 'universal love,' as I call it. Why, I don't think she cares a bit more for me than she does for that sickly Patience Drummond, that has the

patience all in her name, for it seems to me she is perpetually complaining."

"Julia Morris! Don't you think you would complain, too, if you were situated as Patience Drummond is, no dependence for actual support but her aged sister's weak hands, and she liable to be struck down by disease at any moment? I sometimes hear you, who are surrounded with every comfort, fret and complain at trifles light as the air, compared to those which are the daily food of those poor sisters. If you would do as Alice Grey does, go and see them often, carry a bright smile and cheerful words into their darkened home, you would perhaps learn more of the true happiness of life. I felt once as you do; I cared only for the few, prided myself on being 'exclusive,' went just where I pleased, and did what I pleased, and that only. People thought I was happy, and envied my freedom, but in my heart I was not so. I had no well-spring of love, I did not give forth to others, and therefore received nothing. I did not 'walk in love,' as our minister told us so beautifully, last Sunday afternoon, we should. I was the centre of a little selfish circle—my own self the most selfish of all. And had not God sent his angel in the disguise of the heaviest affliction which could befall me, my father's death, which was followed by the breaking up of our home and the loss of property, I should never, perhaps, have known the life of love which now makes this earth a paradise. Believe me, Julia, love, 'universal love,' as you sneeringly call it, is the great panacea for all the trials and sorrows of life. Shed love upon others, and it comes back to you a hundred-fold."

"You may talk to me till doomsday, dear Kate, and I fear I shall never be or desire to be anything but a night-blooming cereus, which only expands and sheds its perfume for the benefit of the choice few who wait and watch around me to glory in my beauty."

"Fading as rapidly as it opens, Julia. Alice Grey is more like the mignonnette, blooming almost unseen, but diffusing a rich perfume, which gives a thrill of joy to every one who comes near it."—*C. Register.*

WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

THE PRAYER OF HABAKKUK.—During Dr. Franklin's residence in Paris, after an evening's entertainment, a number of the literati present assented to the general charge against the Bible, as being a piece of deception, and destitute of any literary merit. While the whole party assented, it was observed the Dr. gave no answer, and they appealed to him for his opinion. In his way, he avoided an expression by saying that his mind had been running on a new book which he had fallen in with in one of the stores. It might interest them if he would read a short section. They were all eager to hear. Taking a book out of his pocket, he read in a grave and solemn manner a short poem. They all pronounced it the best they had ever heard. "That is fine," said one. "That is sublimity," said another. "It has not its superior in the world," was the unanimous opinion. They all wished to know if that was a specimen of the book. "Certainly," said the Dr.; "it is full of such passages. It is no other than your good-for-nothing Bible, out of which I have read the prayer of Habakkuk."

SELPHISHNESS.—The prayer of every selfish man is, "Forgive our debts," but he makes everybody pay who owes him to the uttermost farthing.

HEATHEN GODS.—An establishment at Birmingham, which manufactures gods for the Orientals, advertises its wares thus in a Calcutta paper: "Yamen, the god of the dead, in fine copper, embossed, and very tastefully wrought. Rirondi, the prince of demons, splendidly designed: the giant on which he rides is of a perfect model, and his sword is of a modern pattern. Varoni, the god of the sun—a brilliant piece of art; his crocodile is of copper, and has a silver tail. Bouberen, the god of wealth; this god is of superior workmanship—the manufacturers have expended upon it their best skill. Also, other small demi-gods and inferior divinities, a very large assortment. Credit will not be given, but a discount made for cash payments."

FATHER BALLOU'S WORDS.—God saves sinners because he loves them. He does not wait until they first love him, before he can have any love towards them. Our good Father Ballou used to make this plain in his discourses, thus: "Your child has fallen into the mire, and its body and its garments are defiled. You cleanse it, and array it in clean robes. The question is, Do you love your child because you have washed it; or, Did you wash it because you loved it?"—*Universalist*.

FILIAL LOVE.—When a young woman behaves to her parents in a manner particularly affectionate and respectful, from principle as well as nature, there is nothing good and gentle that may not be expected from her in whatever condition she may be placed. Were I to advise a friend as to his choice of a wife, my first counsel would be, "Look out for a pious

girl, distinguished for her attention and love to her parents." The fund of true worth and affection indicated by such behaviour, joined to the habits of duty and consideration thereby contracted, being transferred to the married state, will not fail, as a rule, to render her a mild, obliging and invaluable companion for life.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.—The Swedish journals have for some time been nearly exclusively filled with dissertations on the necessity of the abolition of capital punishment, originating in an execution that took place in the neighbourhood of Stockholm.

AN AWFUL THOUGHT.—The thought that the doctrine of endless misery may possibly be true, and of God, is certainly an awful thought. We wonder not that a little child, when told by its mother of an ever-burning hell, said, "I wish I had never been born!"

LOOK IN THE GLASS.—"Never associate with pigs, my dears," said a duck to her young brood, as the sow with her litter of ten passed in the road. "Never associate with them, children; they are such gluttons, and such remarkably dirty feeders." "Well, if that isn't cool!" said the old sow, who heard the charge. "How little we know ourselves! Why there isn't a mud-pool that you wouldn't delight to poke your bill into; and as to gluttony, when were you ever known to stop eating while there was anything to eat? If you want to remember yourself, then, perhaps you won't be so hard upon others."

THE DEACON'S RETORT.—The deacon was not very much behind, if the following story be true. In a small town on the Schyulkill River there is a church in which the singing had run down. It had been led many years by one of the deacons, whose voice and musical powers had been gradually failing. One evening the clergyman gave out the hymn, which was, in material measure, rather harder than usual, and the deacon led off. Upon its conclusion the minister rose and said: "Brother B— will please repeat the hymn, as I cannot pray after such singing." The deacon very composedly pitched into another tune, and the clergyman proceeded with his prayer. Having finished, he took up the book to give the second hymn, when he was interrupted by the deacon gravely getting up and saying in a voice audible to the whole congregation: "Will Mr. C— make another prayer? It would be impossible for me to sing after such praying as that!"

UNITARIAN HAND-BOOK.—The third edition, sixth thousand, price One Shilling, sent post free by WHITFIELD, GREEN & SON, 178, Strand.

Communications for the Editor to be addressed to Rev. ROBERT SPEARS, 39, Stamford Street, S., and all Business Letters to WHITFIELD, GREEN & SON, 178, Strand, W.C.

Printed and Published by
WHITFIELD, GREEN & SON, 178, STRAND.